

Descriptions of Instructional Activities and Models Supporting Phonemic Awareness

Instructional Activities

- **Catch a Rhyme**

The teacher throws a ball of yarn or a beach ball to a child and says: "Tell me a word that rhymes with lawn." The child says a rhyming word and throws the ball back to the teacher.

- **Blending Sounds**

Give students several blank counters. Say a word, stretching each sound in the word. Students repeat the sounds slowly and move a counter for each sound. Then they say each sound faster, moving their fingers below the counters as they say the word.

- **Change That Tune**

The teacher leads children in a familiar song but substitutes different sounds in the lyrics.

- **What's in a Name?**

Collect a number of objects in a box or pictures of objects. Include objects that differ from one another in the number of syllables in their name. One student draws out object and names it. All children repeat the name of the object as they clap out the syllables. Ask how many syllables were heard. As students become more adept at the game, use items with names that are longer and more varied in length

- **Matching Sounds**

Place several different objects on a table (a sock, pen, book, box, clip). One student chooses an object and says its name. Students say other words that end with the same sound as the object's name. For example, the pen is chosen. Students say other words that end with the /n/ sound, such as can, moon, fun, and pumpkin. Continue with other objects.

- **Catch It!**

Students form a circle. The teacher says a one-syllable word, ship, and tosses a bean bag to a student. The student catches the bag and says the initial sound in the word, /sh/. The student tosses the bag to another student and says the medial sound, /i/. The bag is thrown again and the student who catches it says the final sound, /p/. The group repeats the whole word, ship. Continue with other words.

- **Round and Round We Go**

The teacher passes out familiar objects or pictures and asks students who have an object that begins with the /b/ to name it. Ask all students to name the object separating the onset from the rime (i.e., /b/ /asket/) Then have the student place the object in the pile. Collect all object that start with the sound.

Then ask for objects that begin with other sounds. As students bring them to the pile, sort them into categories by their beginning sound.

- **Clueless**

Divide the class into two teams. Pair students on each team. Place pictures of one-syllable words in a stack, face down. One pair selects the top picture (mop). The pair gives clues about the sounds in the picture's name to all the members of the other team until they guess the picture's name.

- **Say It and Move It!**

1. Give children a "Say It and Move It" card and several counters.

2. Have children place the counters above the solid line.

3. Say a word with two or three phonemes, such as the word sip.

4. Have the children segment the word into phonemes by saying the word slowly and moving the counters. They move the counters down to the arrow as a guide for placement.

/s/ Children move a counter down to the dot on the arrow.

/i/ Children move a second counter down to the right of the first counter on the arrow.

/p/ Children move a third counter down to the right of the second counter on the arrow.

5. After they have moved all three counters to the arrow, have the children blend the sounds together as they repeat the word and slide their fingers below the counters in a left to right sequence. (Variation: Children repeat the word while sliding all of the counters in one continuous motion across the arrow in a left to right sequence.)

6. Continue with this procedure using other words (e.g., mat, let).

This activity can be used for practice with:

- Words with silent e (e.g., make, mine) and words with consonant combinations (e.g., ship, that).
- Letter tiles for blending letter-sound correspondences to read words.

Adapted from Blachman, B. A., Ball, E. W., Black, R., & Tangel, D. M. (2000). *Road to the code: A phonological awareness program for young children*. Baltimore: Brookes; Neuhaus Education Center. (1992). Reading readiness. Bellaire, TX: Author. All rights reserved. 1-713-664-7676. www.neuhaus.org

- **Using Elkonin Sound Boxes**

1. Have children draw three boxes on a sheet of paper or dry-erase board.

2. Distribute counters to children. Have them place counters above the boxes. Model the activities before children begin.

3. Follow the same procedure as in "Say It and Move It." For each phoneme, children move a counter to each box in a left-to-right progression.

For example: Say the word let.

Children move the counters that represent the sounds they hear in the word:



/l/

/e/

/t/

Children say the word again, sliding their finger below the boxes from left to right: let.

- **Words in Sentences**

Give each child six or seven blocks or interlocking cubes. Say a sentence, stretching each word in the sentence. Model for students how to repeat your sentence to themselves word by word with clear pauses between each and moving a counter for each word. Encourage the children to arrange the blocks from left to right so they begin to establish directionality.

After arranging their block, the teacher or a student repeats the sentence, pointing to each block while pronouncing the word it represents. Everyone repeats and points.

At first, all sentences should be short (two or three words). Longer sentences should be introduced later to help children observe that longer sentences have more words. Monosyllabic words should be used until after children have worked with syllables. After working with syllables, revisit this activity to reinforce their ability to distinguish syllables from words.

- **BINGO**

Teacher says beginning sound of word. Children place counter on card with beginning sound. Students say the word back.

- **Drop Off Add On**

Say words one at a time. Ask the children, "What word do you get if you take the /m/ sound off of meat? [eat]"

"What word do you get if you add the /f/ sound to eat?"

"What is left if you take the /m/ sound off of mice?"

"What is left if you take the /s/ sound off of mice?"

- **Word Play** Children change beginning, middle, or ending letters of related words, thus changing the words they decode and spell.
- **Describe It!** of different foods. These phrases contain words that all begin with the same sound:

jolly juice

round rolls

big bean burrito

- **Sound Blocks**

The teacher gives children two blocks that do not have any numbers or letters written on them.

Blocks are placed in a row.

The teacher says: "When I want to say tap in two parts, I touch the blocks like this."

[Touch the first block and say /t/; touch the second block and say /-ăp/.]

The teacher says other words that end in /-ăp/. The children touch the blocks as they say the words in two parts.

- **One at a Time**

The teacher slowly says a sentence: "We are on our way to lunch."

Children take one step, hop, or skip for each word in the sentence.

Variation: Children step on one tile square for each word.

- **Sound by Sound**

The teacher says a three- or four-phoneme word such as cat or lamp.

Children play a clapping game with the teacher or another child.

They clap or touch hands as they say the individual sounds in the word:

/k/ /ă/ /t/ or /l/ /ă/ /m/ /p/

- **Take Off Cinderella**

Play Take Off Cinderella after reading and discussing the story.

Teacher: "Let's play a game using some of the words from the story. If I ask you to take off the /s/ sound in mice, you say my. Let's try one. Take off the /m/ in midnight. What's left?"

Students: 'idnight."

Teacher: "Very good, idnight is correct."

The game continues with other words from the story such as coach, gown, wand, and prince.

Variation: Use words from any story.

